

BLANDFORD RURAL DISTRICT  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
FOR THE YEAR..... 1970



BLANDFORD RURAL DISTRICT

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ..... Councillor S.R. Stenning  
VICE- CHAIRMAN ..... Councillor K.E.J. Fletcher

COUNCILLORS:-

Miss A.G. Biddlecombe	Mrs. D.L. Jones
K.R. Browning	F.H.B. Mainwaring-Burton
A.B.C. Davis	C.R.J. Mitchell (ex-officio)
P.L. Farquharson (ex-officio)	C.B.C. Roe
Mrs. S. Hooper	J.A. Woodhouse
C.F. House	

-----  
MEMBERS OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE..... Councillor R.C.J. Hayward  
VICE-CHAIRMAN ..... Miss A.G. Biddlecombe

COUNCILLORS:-

E.F.C. Amey	F. Lewis
Mrs. M. Cossins	C.R.J. Mitchell J.P. (ex officio)
P.L. Farquharson (ex-officio)	S.A. Parker
Mrs. S. Hooper	Mrs. H.M. Ramsay
A.E. Lane	C.D.C. Roe
J.R.N. Tory	

-----

BLANDFORD RURAL DISTRICT.

STAFF OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

G.B. Hopkins M.B., Ch.B., B.Pharm., D.P.H.

holding appointments of:-

Senior Assistant County Medical Officer ) Dorset County Council  
School Medical Officer. ) 5/11<sup>th</sup> of time.

Medical Officer of Health - Blandford Rural District.  
Medical Officer of Health - Borough of Blandford Forum  
Medical Officer of Health - Wimborne Minster Urban District  
Medical Officer of Health - Wimborne and Cranborne Rural District.

-----  
Honorary Medical Officer to the Dorset Water Board.

-----  
Blandford Rural District.....  $\frac{1}{2}$  day per week  
Borough of Blandford Forum.....  $\frac{1}{4}$  day per week  
Wimborne Minster Urban District.....  $\frac{1}{3}$  day per week  
Wimborne and Cranborne Rural District.....  $1\frac{1}{2}$  days per week

-----  
PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR:-

P.D. Franklin. M.A.P.H.I. M.R.S.H.

Area Office,  
Health Clinic,  
Rowlands Hill,  
Wimborne Minster,  
Dorset.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I present my Annual Report for the year 1970.

I have given an impression in recent years that the subject of the traditional notifiable diseases could be relegated to a small corner of my Annual Report and I have therefore to report two minor disappointments in this sphere. Measles continues to trickle on because of a failure to immunise sufficient children, partly due to misplaced prejudice on the part of parents who heard of a few rather sharp reactions to one brand of vaccine and who have not realised that this problem was soon remedied, and partly due to a temporary shortage of supplies occasioned by the remedying of the above problems. Nevertheless 190 doses were administered with a probable success rate of about 80% to be expected.

The whooping cough vaccine showed signs of losing some of its effectiveness in the field, and subsequent improvements have been made which should show dividends in future years. German Measles vaccine became available early in the year but in very restricted quantity. The policy adopted by the Ministry was to administer what was available to the thirteen year old girls, this age being a compromise between vaccinating as late as possible for maximum effect during the child bearing years, and the necessity to avoid vaccinating during pregnancy. A mere two doses were given in 1970 but many more have been given at the time of writing. This policy will be continued as more vaccine becomes available and in future years fewer babies with severe congenital abnormalities due to the German Measles virus will be born, especially if some parents were less supremely confident that their children had already had German Measles. It has been established that an alleged history of having had German Measles carries with it no guarantee of antibodies to this disease in the bloodstream so that confidence in a past history of infection leading to refusal of the vaccine may lead to disaster in a later pregnancy in a few unfortunate women. The basic reason for this confusion is that at least one other virus can closely simulate German Measles.

The above comments illustrate the practical difficulties, including the severe problems of communication, which remain even when a satisfactory medical solution to a pressing problem has been evolved.

-----

Each year I receive a very large form SD 25 from the General Register Office recording the numbers of deaths in the district by sex and age group. It is very salutary to study this document, which I have set out in abbreviated form on page // by cause and sex only, in order to convey more succinctly the message. A very quick reference to these few columns reveals the alarming toll of certain diseases, the most striking by far being Ischaemic Heart Disease, or Coronary Thrombosis, claiming 15 males and 11 females.

Pinpointing



Pinpointing the distribution by age is further revealing:-

Cause of Death	Sex	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 and over
Ischaemic Heart Disease	M	1	2	2	6	4
	F	-	-	-	2	9
Total All Causes .....	M	2	8	7	23	24
	F	2	2	4	6	34
Percentage due to Ischaemic Heart Disease	M	50	25	29	26	17
	F	0	0	0	33	16

The rot starts at 35 though this cause can and does occasionally operate as early as adolescence. The ladies lag behind strikingly and it is not until the 65 to 74 decade that they make much show of catching up and do not in fact catch up until after 75 years by which time there are so many more women than men that they necessarily begin to assume the ascendancy in numbers of deaths by cause.

The Council of the World Health Organisation recently stated:-

"I.H.D. or Coronary Artery Disease has reached enormous proportions, striking more and more at younger subjects. It will result in coming years in the greatest epidemic mankind has faced unless we are able to reverse the trend by concentrated research into its cause and prevention."

A vast amount of thought and research has already been devoted to this problem and sufficient is known about it to make a major impact upon the risk for those willing to modify their way of life. This is a sphere in which health education can have a major impact. Another problem of communication and motivation!.

Meanwhile, one aspect of the above problem well within the sphere of interest of the Council concerns the significance of the water supply. It has been amply demonstrated that there is a statistical association between mortality, particularly from cardiovascular disease (strokes and coronary disease) and the softness and hardness of drinking water, the harder the better for health. Suggestive evidence has recently been advanced that altering the degree of hardness for any reason is followed by the change in the incidence of cardiovascular disease which would be expected on the basis of the above observation.

It has for long been argued that the softening of water supplies is wasteful since much of it is used for purposes for which the degree of hardness is immaterial and that the advent of detergents has further diminished the practical advantages of soft water. Even in the bath where most of us stick to soap (even here the children often prefer bubble baths!), the affluent society could afford bath salts to soften the water.

This

This leaves the effect of hard water on domestic and industrial boilers as the only substantial remaining benefit of softening water, to be balanced against the cost of the process and the cost to health.

It is easier never to start something rather than to stop it once started, and on this basis it is now a retrograde step to think in terms of instituting softening processes on hard water supplies.

The following table gives relevant details of the various supplies distributed in East Dorset:-

Total Hardness of Water Supplies in East Dorset in ppm

<u>Stanbridge</u> .....	Wimborne and Cranborne R.D.C.....	250
<u>Walford Bridge</u> .....	Wimborne Urban District	
	before softening.....	290
	after softening .....	180
<u>Corfe Mullen</u> .....	Wimborne and Cranborne R.D.C.	
	before softening.....	250
	after softening.....	140
<u>Sturminster Marshall</u> ..	Wimborne and Cranborne R.D.C.....	260
<u>Black Lane</u> .....	Borough of Blandford Forum .....	260
<u>Milborne St.Andrew</u> ....	Blandford R.D.C.....	250

The order of benefit conferred by hard water in comparison with soft water is a reduction in the rate of cardiovascular mortality of about one fifth.

-----

That veteran amongst complaints, the fouling of pavements by dogs, continues to feature from time to time in the local and national press. Byelaws are almost useless as a remedy for this disgusting state of affairs owing to a difficulty of obtaining witnesses, and indeed publicity is the only current remedy of any real use to a Local Authority; Britain is the most dog ridden nation in the world, cats are even more numerous though far more fastidious. There are 3½ million dogs and 4 million cats in Great Britain and owning a dog or even two dogs is becoming "de rigueur".



There is a widespread belief that it is good for children to be taught responsibility for the humane care of dumb animals but some pet experts say that smaller pets such as white mice and guinea pigs are more suitable for children. Many children are actively frightened of dogs. Dogs are put forward as many old peoples' indispensable companions but this is only infrequently the case, many old people find their pets become increasingly burdensome, but once having become attached to them, cannot resolve the burden:-

"There is sorrow enough in the natural way  
From men and women to fill our day:  
But when we are certain of sorrow in store,  
Why do we always arrange for more?  
Brothers and Sisters I bid you beware  
Of giving your heart to a dog to tear"

- The Power of the Dog - Kipling

We are so accustomed to the fouling of public places by dogs that we fail to notice it just as we fail to hear the tick of a clock, but it would be salutary if all of us closely observed the pavements of our local town and really observed the degree of pollution. Nearly every shop front after a spell of dry weather reveals the dark stain of dried dogs' urine trickling across the pavement, and frequently worse. The blind, the old, the crippled, the young and the fit tread this excrement into cars and homes either visibly and offensively or at least microscopically and it is worth while considering whether this offence stops at the aesthetic. Dogs are fairly healthy creatures but they can convey disease.

There is currently advancing westwards across Europe at about 30 to 60 km a year an epizootic of rabies, a disease from the menace of which we have been free for very many years. The main vector amongst animals is the fox but the dog is the main vector of human disease, not only by actual bites but also by saliva from an infected animal, a less obvious risk. The disease has already entered Belgium and France and is expected on the Channel Coast by 1975. The channel has many times protected us from invasion but it is a moot point whether it will stop rabies, especially since there is known dog smuggling. If it does not, then the bite of a dog will assume vastly more significance than it has previously during this century. There would have to be instituted a policy of vaccinating against rabies all dogs, and in practice this would be difficult to organise and many dogs would escape. This alone is a practical reason for arresting the dog population explosion. Other diseases transmitted by dogs are Hydatidosis, Toxocariasis, Salmonellosis, Leptospirosis, Tetanus, Listeriosis, Pasteurellosis and Ringworm.

Hydatidosis is a serious worm disease much more prevalent in sheep dogs and dogs having access to sheep country than in town dogs. The dog harbours the worm and transmits larvae to human beings via its excreta. There are probably several hundred cases at any one time in Gt. Britain of infection of human beings by the cystic stage in the life cycle, a condition the outlook for which is much the same as cancer.

Toxocariasis is rather similar and very recent evidence suggests that tiny cysts in humans stemming from this fairly common worm infestation in dogs and cats may be responsible for some hitherto inexplicable cases of epilepsy.

Salmonellosis



Salmonellosis is the condition of infection by one of the hundreds of salmonella food poisoning germs from which any animal can suffer, and any animal can transmit, including dogs, by faecal contamination of the environment.

Leptospirosis is a serious illness characterised by jaundice and kidney damage, commonly infecting dogs, the reservoir normally being rats. Dog bites usually necessitate preventive steps against the acquisition of tetanus.

Listeriosis is a meningeal infection transmissible from dogs and pasteurellosis is an infection which may similarly be conveyed from a dog by scratching, biting or licking. Ringworm is often transmitted by dogs either directly or via fabrics against which they commonly lie, such as the frills round a fireside chair.

It may very well be the case that death and injury to human beings from road accidents caused by dogs exceed in importance all the above infections, while injury in the home due to tripping over dogs, especially in old people, is worthy of mention.

There are other disadvantages. They convey dirt into homes, sometimes exhibit embarrassing behaviour, are frequently in the way, are a source of expense or extra nuisance at holiday times and have a considerable impact upon other people. Postmen could legitimately enlarge upon this aspect. The problem of barking dogs is a frequent source of friction amongst neighbours. They often become smelly, are a major trial to owners and others from mating urges, do damage to the fabric of the home, especially when puppies. All things considered it is rather remarkable that there are so many dogs but there are many pressures, not least the lovable little creatures romping in the windows of pet shops. A popular B.B.C. Childrens' programme ardently and permanently puts out powerful propaganda in favour of dog owning. One of the wholly admirable young actors on this programme recently announced that puppies should be taken out to a piece of waste ground at stated and fairly frequent intervals, glossing over the implications of this statement, what happens when there is not a handy piece of waste land, what about other people's children who play on that same piece of waste land, and who takes the animal out when the children are at school, and when they are on holiday and have lost interest?.

Many dog owners are unwilling or unable to devote the time to "exercising" their animals where their excrement will cause least offence to others, and so combine this chore with their shopping, with the inevitable result that the pavement outside food shops may bear a marked contrast to the conditions required by the Food Hygiene Regulations within them.

The purpose of my diatribe is to appeal for support for a substantial increase in dog licences. A tax was first raised on dogs in 1796 varying with the type of dog, more for sporting dogs than others probably to deter poaching. After the French Wars the rates were fixed in 1812 at £1 for a greyhound, 14/- for any other sporting dog or one kept by a person keeping two or more, (what an excellent idea!), and 8/- for others. In 1840, 10% was added to these rates, and 1853 the rate was consolidated at 12/- per dog, with certain exemptions. In 1867, a generous Government slashed the duty to 5/- but in 1878, only 11 years later, a 50% increase to 7/6d was imposed, and there, for nearly 100 years, the figure remained.

Would

Would it not therefore be reasonable to impose a tax to take account of inflation?. Seven and six in 1900 is now worth three pounds.

There could be suitable exemptions and the tax could be raised in increments so as to bear not too hardly on existing dog owners and give people warning of their future commitments, many would without doubt opt for guinea pigs, charming clean little creatures which do not cause road accidents!. The proceeds could form a local tax which would cover the employment of a dog warden to round up strays, check tax evasion, and administer the bye-laws on the fouling of pavements. Some such officials exist already.

-----

There follows the report of the Public Health Inspector and the customary tabulated information.

OCTOBER, 1971

*J. B. Hapkin*  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS

Area in acres.....	61, 717
Population as estimated by Registrar General - mid year.....	13, 880
Rateable value as at 1st April, 1970.....	£13,057
Estimated product of penny rate at 1st April 1970.....	£ 4,100
Estimated number of inhabited houses on 31st December 1970..	3,989

---

AS SUPPLIED BY THE REGISTRAR  
GENERAL

<u>BIRTHS.</u>	<u>MALES.</u>	<u>FEMALES.</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>Live Births</u>			
Total.....	93	112	205
Legitimate.....	87	107	194
Illegitimate.....	6	5	11
-----			
<u>STILLBIRTHS</u>			
Total.....	2	-	2
Legitimate.....	2	-	2
Illegitimate.....	-	-	-
-----			
<u>DEATHS.</u>			
All ages.....	66	51	117

---

	<u>Blandford Rural District.</u>	<u>England &amp; Wales.</u>	<u>Administrative County</u>
Standardised Birth Rate...	14. 8	16. 0	16.1
Standardised Death Rate..	8. 4	11. 7	10.7

---

COMPARABILITY FACTORS.

Births.....	1.30
Deaths.....	1.24

---



## SECTION A

### PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY

The Public Health Laboratory is situated in Dorchester and provides an excellent free service for the bacteriological examination of human specimens, food, milk and water.

### AMBULANCE FACILITIES

The Ambulance Service is provided by the Dorset County Council. Control is centralised in Dorchester and the service operates from Castleman House.

### MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

Dorset County Council provided an Infant Welfare Clinic once a month in the Health Centre in Blandford where other services are also grouped, including the school dental services for the area, speech therapy, audiometry, family planning, special examinations, cervical cytology, chiropody for the elderly, ante-natal classes and the home help organiser. The area health visitors are based on this clinic. The registrar of births and deaths attends the clinic three times weekly.

### HOME HELP SERVICE

A local organiser attends to the detailed administration of this valuable service and is at the Health Clinic from 9 to 9.30 a.m. during week-days.

## SECTION B

### PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Measles .....43  
Scarlet fever ..... 1  
Infective hepatitis ..... 2

### TUBERCULOSIS

The number of cases on the register is as follows:-

#### PULMONARY

Males ..... 10  
Females ..... 6

#### NON-PULMONARY

Males ..... 0  
Females ..... 1

### VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION STATISTICS

Poliomyelitis		Diphtheria		Tetanus		Whooping Cough		Smallpox		Measles	Rubella
P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R		
212	382	193	319	258	454	188	183	122	90	190	2

P ..... Primary Course  
R ..... Reinforcing dose

# SECTION C

## STATISTICAL TABLES, 1970

<u>CAUSE OF DEATH</u>	<u>MALE</u>	<u>FEMALE</u>
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach .....	2	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine .....	-	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus .....	7	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast .....	-	3
Malignant Neoplasm, Prostate .....	1	
Other Malignant Neoplasms .....	4	4
Other Diseases of Nervous System.. .....	2	1
Hypertensive Disease .....	1	2
Ischaemic Heart Disease .....	15	11
Other Forms of Heart Disease .....	2	3
Cerebrovascular Disease .....	9	11
Other Diseases of Circulatory System .....	4	1
Influenza .....	3	-
Pneumonia .....	1	2
Bronchitis and Emphysema .....	6	-
Asthma .....	1	-
Peptic Ulcer .....	2	-
Cirrhosis of Liver .....	1	1
Other Diseases of Digestive System .....	-	1
Hyperplasia of Prostate .....	1	
Other Diseases, Genito-Urinary System .....	-	2
Diseases of Skin, Subcutaneous Tissue .....	-	1
Diseases of Musculo-Skeletal System .....	-	1
Congenital Anomalies .....	-	1
Motor Vehicle Accidents .....	2	1
All Other Accidents .....	1	2
Suicide and Self-Inflicted Injuries .....	1	-
<u>TOTAL ALL CAUSES</u>	66	51



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC  
HEALTH INSPECTOR  
BLANDFORD RURAL DISTRICT.

As envisaged in my last report, the Council adopted a new septic tank emptying service in mid-year. There is now a contract with Cleansing Service (Southern Counties) Ltd., who empty septic tanks upon request from individual householders and the Council contribute 50% of the costs involved. Since its inception the system has worked very well indeed and in its present form appears to be very fair, as areas with the greatest need receive the greatest benefit. From the records kept in the office it is very apparent that the problem of poor sub-soil drainage is concentrated within just a few areas of the Rural District and although individuals in other places experience spasmodic difficulties there are very real problems in at least two areas in the Authority. One of these is Charlton Marshall and the other is in the Hilton-Ansty area. At the former the chalk and clay mixture is a very real barrier to soakage and the main drainage, when it becomes operative, will be a very real boon to very many householders. The other area experiences similar problems. Layers of greensand near to the surface of this locality coupled with areas of relatively high density, especially on sloping sites is bound to cause trouble. More and more water is being used in the average household with an overall tendency to aggravate the existing problems.

Refuse collection continued to account for a large amount of working time during the year and here again it is noticeable that as both living standards rise and the increase in the use of plastics is maintained so does the bulk of refuse collected <sup>continue</sup> to increase dramatically. It is a sobering thought that of all the amount collected and in the light of present knowledge, at least 1/10th is preserving itself, intact and eternally, for posterity. The tip continues to function in a very satisfactory manner and is operated in a completely controlled fashion.

An outbreak of Salmonellosis occurred amongst humans and cattle at a Dairy within the District towards the end of the year. There were at least two individual waves of infection accounting for patients up to 100 miles away and a long series of checks were made through the main sewerage system in the village, manhole by manhole, in an effort to trace back carriers of the organisms. Fortunately (or unfortunately) after persisting for some months and by the time the last few lengths of sewer were being tested the organism cleared itself as did the Dairy herd and no further investigations were required.

Whilst dealing with the general question of sampling, there seems to be an increase in the number of domestic and small swimming pools around the countryside. This is undoubtedly a trend of the affluent society but it is a trend which could bear watching not only from the point of view/

of



of cross infection from poorly treated pools but from the inevitable pressure of such associated risks as rats and spirochete infection.

The general housing survey of the district was continued through the year and by December the end was approaching. The number of all really bad properties so far turned up has been a matter for some satisfaction and as the survey proceeds no property which is completely sub-standard is being left without some form of action upon it.

The new development in the field of petroleum installations and regulations is the presence and use of the self-service pump. These fall in to two categories - firstly "money acceptor types" which can remain on an open forecourt ready for use at all times and then there is the other type self-service which is mainly a service to increase the number of trading stamps to be given, whereby the customer serves himself but pays an attendant. The first of these latter installations was created during the year and another was envisaged. These are obviously signs of the times and due regard is paid to the difference in use and the new problems and hazards that self-service can create.

-----

SAMPLES SUBMITTED FOR BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION

Satisfactory

Ice Cream.....	13
Faeces.....	6
Raw Milk.....	9
Swimming area - River Stour.....	4
Water.....	7
Washing.....	2
Swabs.....	9

-----

SALVAGE.

Rags .....	12.50
Aluminium.....	11.92
Brass.....	3.20
Copper.....	3.15
Iron.....	26.62½
Batteries.....	4.10

FOOD CONDEMNED.

235 lbs Meat and Meat products.

69 lbs Fish.

FACTORIES.

No. on Register.

Inspection

Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4

and 6 are enforced by Local Authorities.

1

1

Factories not included in (1) which

Section 7 is enforced by Local

Authorities.....

38

8

Other premises in which Section 7 is

enforced by Local Authority(ex-

cluding out-workers premises).....

0

0

CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND:-

Particulars.

Found.

Remedied.

Referred to

H.M. Inspector.

By H.M.

Inspector.

Number of

Cases in

which

prosecution  
instituted.

Want of Cleanliness.....

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

Overcrowding.....

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

Sanitary Accommodation..

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

Inadequate Ventilation...

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

Unreasonable Temperature.

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

SEPTIC TANKS

The number of septic tanks emptied during the year was..... 43

## WASTE PAPER.

Tip..... £305.69

## PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT

Number of initial visits.....	717
Number of re-visits.....	392
Visits for other reasons.....	233
Major infestations (rats).....	69
Major infestations (mice).....	36
Minor infestations (rats).....	283
Minor infestations (mice).....	52

## SUMMARY OF VISITS DURING THE YEAR.

Housing Acts.....	567
Public Health.....	69
Factories.....	35
Infectious Diseases.....	38
Petroleum Regulations.....	41
Interviews.....	116
Rodent Control.....	68
Refuse Collection.....	184
Offensive Trades.....	15
Other visits.....	59
Meetings.....	20
O.S.R. Act.....	18
Food and Drugs Act.....	86
Clean Air Act.....	20
Civic Amenities Act.....	64
Noise Abatement Act.....	28
Scrap Metal Dealers Regulations.....	9
Outworkers.....	9
Sampling.....	49
Visits.....	2
Unsound food.....	8

## HOUSING

### By Local Authority.

With State Assistance for rehousing.....	0
With State Assistance for other purposes.....	0
Without State Assistance.....	0

### By other persons.

With State Assistances.....	0
Without State Assistances.....	84

### New Houses commenced during the year but not yet completed:-

By Local Authority.....	0
By other persons.....	80

### Housing Action.

Number of dwellings rendered fit after informal action.	6
Number of Statutory Notices served.....	0
Number of Statutory Notices complied with.....	0
Number of Houses in respect of which Demolitions orders made.	0
Number of Houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition orders.	0
Number of Houses in respect of which undertakings accepted.	4
Number of Houses demolished otherwise.....	0







